

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, US, SK

SUBJECT: WSTAR REPORTS US BREAKS KOREA'S SECRET CODE

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT WSTAR TOP BANNER HEADLINE ARTICLE
MAY 24 (KOREA'S SECRET CODE BROKEN BY U.S.) BY RICHARD G.
ZIMMERMAN.

QUOTE: EVIDENCE SUGGESTING THAT AT LEAST 10 PRESENT
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ACCEPTED CASH PAYMENTS FROM A SOUTH
KOREAN AMBASSADOR WAS OBTAINED BY THE NATIONAL SECURITY
AGENCY AFTER DIPLOMATIC CODES USED BY THE KOREAN EMBASSY
HERE WERE INTERCEPTED AND BROKEN BY AGENCY CRYPTOLOGISTS.

ACCORDING TO SOURCES IN THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, THE
INFORMATION ON THE ALLEGED PAYOFFS, WHICH WAS BEING TRANS-
MITTED TO SEOUL IN THE EARLY 1970S BY THEN-KOREAN AMBASSADOR
KIM DONG JO, HAS BEEN SUPPLIED TO LEON JAWORSKI, SPECIAL
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COUNSEL TO THE HOUSE ETHICS COMMITTEE. IT IS PRIMARILY
ON THE BASIS OF THE NSA INTERCEPTS THAT JAWORSKI IS IN-
SISTING THAT KIM BE FORCED TO RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES
TO TESTIFY IN THE KOREAN PAYOFF SCANDAL.

HOUSE ETHICS COMMITTEE SOURCES SAY THE ONLY WAY ANY SITTING

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE WILL BE DEEPLY IMPLICATED IN THE SCANDAL IF KIM TESTIFIES.

JAWORSKI REFUSED TO COMMENT YESTERDAY ON THE REPORT THAT THE EVIDENCE HE OBLIQUELY ALLUDED TO DURING A HEARING MONDAY HAD COME FROM THE NSA'S CRYPTOLOGY SECTION. HE SAID HE HAS NOT EVEN TOLD MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE THE SOURCE OF THE POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE EVIDENCE, NOR HAS HE NAMED THE SUSPECTED MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

AT MONDAY'S HEARING, JAWORSKI REFERRED ONLY TO "INFORMATION THAT WE CANNOT NOW DISCLOSE" WHICH INDICATES CASH PAYMENTS WERE OFFERED BY KIM AND ACCEPTED BY SEVERAL UNNAMED CONGRESSMEN.

JAWORSKI IS RELUCTANT TO PUBLICLY USE THE NSA EVIDENCE FOR TWO REASONS, ONE SOURCE SPECULATED.

FIRST, HE DOES NOT WANT TO BE IN THE POSITION OF DISCLOSING THAT THE NSA HAS BROKEN KOREA'S DIPLOMATIC CODE AND HAS BEEN MONITORING THE KOREAN EMBASSY HERE - EVEN THOUGH ATTEMPTS TO MONITOR AND DECODE DIPLOMATIC MESSAGES IS A COMMON PRACTICE IN MOST WORLD CAPITALS. KOREA, AFTER ALL, IS STILL CONSIDERED A MAJOR US ALLY AND MONITORING ITS DIPLOMATIC MESSAGES WOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED A FRIENDLY ACT.

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SECOND, THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT OTHER KOREANS INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED PAYOFF SCANDAL, SUCH AS TONGSUN PARK AND HANCHO KIM, TENDED TO EXAGGERATE THE SCOPE AND IMPORTANCE OF THEIR ACTIVITY ON CAPITOL HILL WHEN REPORTING TO SUPERIORS IN SEOUL. THUS KIM'S INTERCEPTED MESSAGES INVOLVING ALLEGED PAYOFFS TO HOUSE MEMBERS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AT FACE VALUE UNTIL HE IS QUESTIONED IN DETAIL BY COMMITTEE INVESTIGATORS.

THERE IS COMPELLING EVIDENCE THAT KIM ATTEMPTED TO PASS THE PROVERBIAL PLAIN WHITE ENVELOPES STUFFED WITH 100 DOL BILLS TO HOUSE MEMBERS.

A FORMER EMPLOYEE AT THE KOREAN EMBASSY HAS TESTIFIED THAT IN 1971 HE CHANCED UPON KIM WHILE HE WAS STUFFING TWO DOZEN ENVELOPES WITH CASH. WHEN ASKED WHERE HE WAS GOING, KIM IS SAID TO HAVE REPLIED, "TO THE CAPITOL."

A CONGRESSIONAL SECRETARY TESTIFIED THAT KIM LEFT AN UNMARKED, CASH-FILLED ENVELOPE WITH REP. LARRY WINN JR., R-KAN., ABOUT A YEAR LATER. A SHORT TIME LATER WINN

ORDERED THE MONEY RETURNED. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN AN EXPLANATION AS TO WHY WINN ACCEPTED THE MONEY IN THE FIRST PLACE IF HE DID NOT PLAN TO KEEP IT.

THE WIVES OF REPS. JOHN MYERS, R-IND., AND KIKO DE LA GARZA, D-TEX, TESTIFIED THAT KIM DONG JO'S WIFE TRIED TO FORCE CASH ON THEM FOR THEIR HUSBANDS' USE DURING A TRIP THE TWO COUPLES MADE TO KOREA. THE MONEY WAS REFUSED.

KIM DONG JO HAS ACCUSED THE FORMER EMBASSY EMPLOYEE OF LYING AND CLAIMED THE SECRETARY WAS MISTAKEN WHEN SHE IDENTIFIED HIS PICTURE AS BEING OF THE PERSON WHO PASSED THE ENVELOPE TO WINN. THE FORMER AMBASSADOR HAS REFUSED TO WAIVE DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY AND RETURN TO TESTIFY BEFORE UNCLASSIFIED

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THE ETHICS COMMITTEE.

WHILE THE EVIDENCE THAT KIM ATTEMPTED TO PASS MONEY TO CONGRESSMEN IS STRONG, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN PUBLICLY RELEASED EVIDENCE THAT ANY CONGRESSMEN ACCEPTED THE CASH.

DURING THE TIME THE KOREANS WERE MOST ACTIVE ON CAPITOL HILL IT WAS NOT ILLEGAL TO ACCEPT CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS FROM A FOREIGN NATIONAL IF THE MONEY CAME FROM PERSONAL FUNDS. SO THOSE WHO ACCEPTED MONEY FROM TONGSUN PARK COULD CLAIM THEY DID NOT KNOW THE CONTRIBUTIONS HE MADE CAME FROM OTHER THAN PERSONAL FUNDS.

BUT DURING THE SAME PERIOD IT WAS ILLEGAL TO ACCEPT CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS OR ANY GIFT FROM A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OR ITS REPRESENTATIVE. UNQUOTE. CHRISTOPHER

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